ALLANMORE - PITKERRALD DRUIM NA DROCHAID Dreach Fiosrachadh-stiùiridh Leasachaidh An Cèitean 2008 - DRUMNADROCHIT May 2008



🖁 Seirbheis Dealbhachaidh agus Leasachaidh

Planning & Development Service



INTRODUCTION	PAGE 1
Preface Purpose Policy Affordable Housing/Needs Assessment Settlement Expansion Site Factors	
SERVICES AND PHASING	5
Access Water and Waste Water Utilities Phasing	5 6
DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT	7
Housing LAYOUT Circulation Recreation Landscape	8 9 10
CONTACTS	12

REFERENCE CODE

Policy / Vision

Background / Supporting Information

Design Guidance

Landowner / Developer Obligations

INTRODUCTION

Preface

1.1 Drumnadrochit is a vibrant local and tourist centre straddling the A82, less than 20 km south-west of Inverness. Investment in a new community High School and water supply, together with initiatives to open up a long term supply of development land is reasserting the community's capacity for growth and to support a broader range of facilities.

1.2 The Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands reinforce the established linear form of the village and a network of connecting green "buffers"; and offer scope to extend the mix of homes - including affordable accommodation - and local amenities. Important controls on the rate of building, high quality design and community-based environmental management is essential to a balanced and sustainable community, the local identity and exceptional character.

Purpose

1.3 The Inverness Local Plan (adopted March 2006) identifies land at Allanmore-Pitkerrald for expansion of "housing and community uses in the medium/longer term" (policy Chapter 2, 23). This Development Brief pursues a commitment to "discuss the principles of development in this locality with community interests...with a view to securing a development compatible with the character of the village". It provides a framework and principles for development, design, land assembly, phasing and infrastructure.

Drumnadrochit Futures

The separate publication Drumnadrochit Futures (May 2008) presents a vision for Drumnadrochit. This looks ahead to 2030 and provides a longer term context for this Brief and development at Allanmore-Pitkerrald.



above: looking west beyond Drumlon towards Allanmore - Pitkerrald

below: towards Kilmore: balancing housing and landscape



1

Policy

2.1 Principles governing development at Allanmore-Pitkerrald and contained within the Inverness Local Plan embrace the following:

- general policies (Chapter 2, 1.49): a 25% affordable housing target as a proportion of private sector housing proposals and further developer contributions towards deficiencies in infrastructure and services [GP4, GP5];
- settlement expansion (Chapter 2, 2.2): controls to ensure house-building in local centres in any 10 year period does not generally exceed 25%, is as evenly distributed as possible, provides choice and is phased to enable development to proceed incrementally.

2.2 Application of these policy considerations in relation to land at Allanmore-Pitkerrald, is explained in paras 2.3-5

Inverness Local Plan

Policy (Chapter 8,23) identifies a commitment to prepare: "a framework for development at Allanmore-Pitkerrald including access options and utilities, phased release of land, a predominantly linear building form, traditional design, segregated links and the management of adjoining amenity areas achieved through Section 75 Agreement where necessary".

Affordable Housing/Needs Assessment

2.3 During the past 20 years, 300 homes have been built in Drumnadrochit, increasing the overall housing stock to approximately 600. Whilst this represents an average of 15 additional homes per annum over that period, the rate of completions has increased by more than 50% since 1996. The pattern of building shows peaks and troughs – 190 homes completed in the 5-year period between 2000-2005; slightly over 20 dwellings in the preceding 5 years.

2.4 The Highland Small Communities Housing Trust carried out a *local needs survey* in 2004. This identified a requirement for some 90 affordable homes, in the rented (26) and low cost home/ shared ownership (60) categories, with scope to embrace self-build/GRO/RHOG opportunities. More recently, the Council's updated housing *waiting list* (Table 1, October 2006) records some 235 households in need of accommodation; 76% (180) have registered for small-sized homes and 24% (55) for medium-large homes.

Table 1 : Loch Ness North: Priority Housing Waiting List						
1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5/6-bed		
132(56%)	48(20%)	38(16%)	14(6%)	3(1%)		



Settlement Expansion

2.5 The following explains the tenets of policy (Inverness Local Plan, Chapter 2, 2: Settlement Expansion) which guide the rate and location of house-building at Drumnadrochit, and therefore at Allanmore-Pitkerrald:

that house-building does not generally exceed 25% in any 10 year period/that the grant of planning permission is limited in any 5-year period to 50% of the 10 year figure.

Table 2 sets a benchmark for a maximum rate of house-building in Drumnadrochit showing increments and accumulations yearon-year over 15 years, controlled to the baseline of 600 houses at 2007. In practice, the baseline will adjust according to the number of houses <u>actually added</u> each year. This provides a basis for calculating the number of houses which may be granted planning permission in compliance with policy, <u>across the village as a</u> <u>whole:</u>

that house-building is distributed as evenly as possible/ is phased to enable development incrementally.

Table 3 (over) differentiates the three landholdings, their notional capacity (no. of houses) and % share of house-building. *Formula A* (opposite, right) transposes the maximum house-building allowance across the village as a whole, to circumstances at Allanmore Pitkerrald. This takes account of houses built/planning permission given at other locations within Drumnadrochit and makes allowance for sites identified H: Housing (Inverness Local Plan) which have capacity for approximately 30 dwellings at March 2008. Formula B should be applied to calculate the proportion of development attributable to each landholding at Allanmore-Pitkerrald, although this may vary according to whether land is assembled or holdings develop independently (see Phasing).

Table 2 : Indicative Housebuilding Rate – Drumnadrochit (base 600)

maximum no. of additional houses per annum

Year		cumulative allowable increase	annual allowable increase	cumulative allowable increase
1	2008	615	15.0	15
2	2009	630	15.3	30
3	2010	646	15.7	46
4	2011	662	16.1	62
5	2012	679	16.5	78
6	2013	695	16.9	95
7	2014	712	17.3	112
8	2015	729	17.8	130
9	2016	747	18.2	148
10	2017	765	18.6	166
11	2018	784	19.1	185
12	2019	803	19.6	204
13	2020	823	20.0	229
14	2021	843	20.5	244
15	2022	864	21.0	265

Fo		

development potential of land at Allanmore-Pitkerrald (no. of houses) in any five year period	=	five year accumulator (Table 2, right-hand column) minus the no. of houses either built or with extant planning permission in the same five year period

Formula B

capacity of each landholding		% of overall site capacity (210
in any 5-year period	=	houses) x 5-year accumulator

3.1 The Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands extend west from the village centre/Drumlon between the flood plain of the River Enrick and the wooded slopes of Craigmonie. Some 15.0 ha. of predominantly arable and pasture - excellent ground conditions supporting the traditional farmsteads and a variable field pattern - sits above a pronounced raised beach escarpment.

There are three landholdings (see Table 3):

- east Lower Milton: (6.9 ha.): bordered to the north by an extremely steep and heavily wooded escarpment and to the south by a mature treed edge, which includes a protected Giant Sequoia. Outcropping rock and vegetation forms a distinctive "knoll" with narrow margins and an open frontage towards Drumlon. Potential for access exists via a field gate to the A82 to the north-east and a shared edge with Pitkerrald Road to the southwest;
- centre Pitkerrald (3.8 ha.): the traditional/renovated farm buildings, adjoining mature trees and claimed Right of Way require safeguarding. A shallow wooded raised beach and electricity sub-station lie to the south. Wetter ground south of Pitkerrald House is evidence of a spring and natural "sump" for surface water. Dissected by Pitkerrald Road, this land occupies a central, pivotal, position with scope to link the neighbouring holdings, including Balmacaan to the south;
- west Allanmore (4.4 ha.): dominated by heavy shading in the lee of Craigmonie and a gentle north facing slope opening out towards the west. A field drain/swale runs across the contour towards the farm buildings. Their position and alignment with Pitkerrald give an indicative *building line* for sun/daylight and development should be held back from the steep, river margin. More extensive views and exposure occur to and from the west.

Table 3 : Landholdings: Indicative Capacities

Lower Milton	6.9 ha.	45%	100-130	
Pitkerrald	3.8 ha.	25%	60-80	
Allanmore	4.4 ha.	30%	40-50	
@density 15-20 houses per ha				

3.2 The capacity of the site and the individual landholdings indicated in *Table 3: Landholdings* is <u>notional</u> and for the purposes of establishing key thresholds and the magnitude of developer contributions.

right: Pitkerrald Road: high amenity public access



below: the flood plain and escarpment: "green buffer"



SERVICES AND PHASING

Access

4.1 There are two preferred means of access to the Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands. One involves Pitkerrald Road - a narrow, largely single-track road with occasional gradients and restricted forward visibility, tight bends and an alignment close to the escarpment in places. Modest widening with limited land-take likely to involve at least one third party could relieve a pinch-point immediately west of the Balmacaan "fork"; opening up the potential for development of some 35-50 houses. Further upgrading of Pitkerrald Road to 5.5-6.0m with 2m footpaths with an option to extend such works over 200-600 metres of its length (the latter retaining a short "throttled-down"/shared-surface section either side of the sub-station) could increase the capacity to 200+ equivalent houses. This would depend upon an alternative emergency access being configured and - subject to Transport Assessment - the Pitkerrald Road-A82 junction upgraded as necessary. Without improvements, Pitkerrald Road is generally not suited to significant increases in traffic over most of its length. Notwithstanding the upgrading options above, this route should be retained where possible as a multi-user thoroughfare: a largely segregated, high amenity link to other established paths and an integral feature of any layout.

4.2 The other involves a link from the A82 south of the village centre car park, via an existing field access. The combination of the escarpment, mature trees and gradient present physical constraints which require to be set against related earthworks, amenity impacts and reasonable costs. Examination of various engineering options including easing-out/realigning the trunk road eastwards to obtain the necessary visibilities; or the formation of a roundabout or staggered junction in due course, is recommended.

Services and Phasing - Action/Implementation

Scottish Water will require developers to undertake a *Network Study* to determine the capacity of the water and waste water mains to serve development and establish any requirement for related off-site works, associated thresholds and phasing. The cost of such works will require to be met by landowners/developers.

4.3 In respect of either option, consideration should be given to the long term potential to open-up the Balmacaan lands - ultimately involving routes via the schools access - and to extend development west via the A863 and a bridge over the River Enrick beyond Milton. The potential for such links requires to be protected.

4.4 A further route from the A82 through the village centre car park along the toe of the escarpment has been examined. This would involve a road some 400 m long, constructed within the flood plain and requiring substantial engineering works and a suitable gradient to ascend the raised beach. Without the potential to serve development in the intervening green "buffer", this could involve inordinate off-site costs. Despite the scope to combine possible flood works, it would not contribute to a cohesive community.

Water and Waste Water

4.5 It is understood that the WwTW offers capacity to serve upwards of 100 houses. As a Category IV *asset*, any upgrading of the works will fall to Scottish Water. The mains network is located in the A82, with branches extending as far as the schools, a distance of at least 150m from development within the Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands.

4.6 The supply of water is understood to involve the installation of a new trunk water mains through part of the site with the opportunity for a direct connection. A 10m-wide *corridor* along its route kept free from development for maintenance, could form part of a wider public access network.

Utilities

4.7 Electricity supplies from the major sub-station at Pitkerrald are transmitted through a network of 33kv overhead lines along two main axes: east-west through the Allanmore lands and by the River Enrick to the village centre; and north-south through Culnacuirk to Balmacaan.

4.8 Telecom services situated within the A82 and A863 branch out as far as the farmsteads at Allanmore and Pitkerrald.

Phasing

4.9 The phasing of development will be determined by a combination of factors:

- land assembly whether the site is released/marketed as a whole or in two or more lots: and
- servicing whether access/infrastructure connections are made predominantly from the A82 or from Pitkerrald Road.

4.10 Such considerations may enable development to proceed predominantly from (i) east to west, or from (ii) the centre, to the east and west; the latter enabling building simultaneously within each of the holdings.



Services and Phasing - Action/Implementation

A comprehensive servicing plan for the Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands will be a prerequisite of any development proposal. This should differentiate the infrastructure needed to facilitate development of the site as a whole from that servicing the individual landholdings. Such works - which will include off-site works and works outwith the "development footprint" - will be expected to be a shared responsibility with costs attributed to each landholding pro-rata with its potential for development.

Reservations will be made for long term links via the main distributor road network to land at Balmacaan and land west of Allanmore, in the event that either might develop in future.

Housing - Action/Implementation

Development proposals should be based upon a comprehensive layout for an appropriate mix of accommodation in each phase/landholding and a Design Statement demonstrating compliance with the concept and principles of this Brief. Section 75 Agreement will be sought to secure developer contribution of 25% affordable housing.



left: safeguarded trees towards Pitkerrald

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Housing

5.1 The shape of the development "footprint" and the contiguous east-west "buffers" suits a predominantly linear building form. Allanmore-Pitkerrald should develop as a "neighbourhood" with a distinctive identity, replicating the grain of the villages and the green wedges connecting them. Development should be served primarily by a network of new routes designed to connect housing and other uses, reflect the layout and character of building, manage traffic and secure safety for cyclists, pedestrians and other users.

5.2 A legible hierarchy of buildings and an orderly layout should provide - in each of the landholdings - a mix of housing types, forms and tenures, including affordable accommodation and "self-build" plots. Higher density/higher intensity development should give emphasis in central positions and create focal points; with a gradation towards lower density/lower intensity accommodation towards the outer edges. "Streets" and "avenues" should be configured principally as through and continuous thoroughfares with buildings on one or both sides; and massing and variety

introduced to give greater depth and height with occasional "courtyards" and "squares". Higher buildings will give rise to wider spaces between; lower buildings will enable narrower thoroughfares. These principles and their detailed application is set out in Table 4: *Design Principles* and illustrated on the *Layout map.* Proposals will be scrutinized for their compatibility with both.

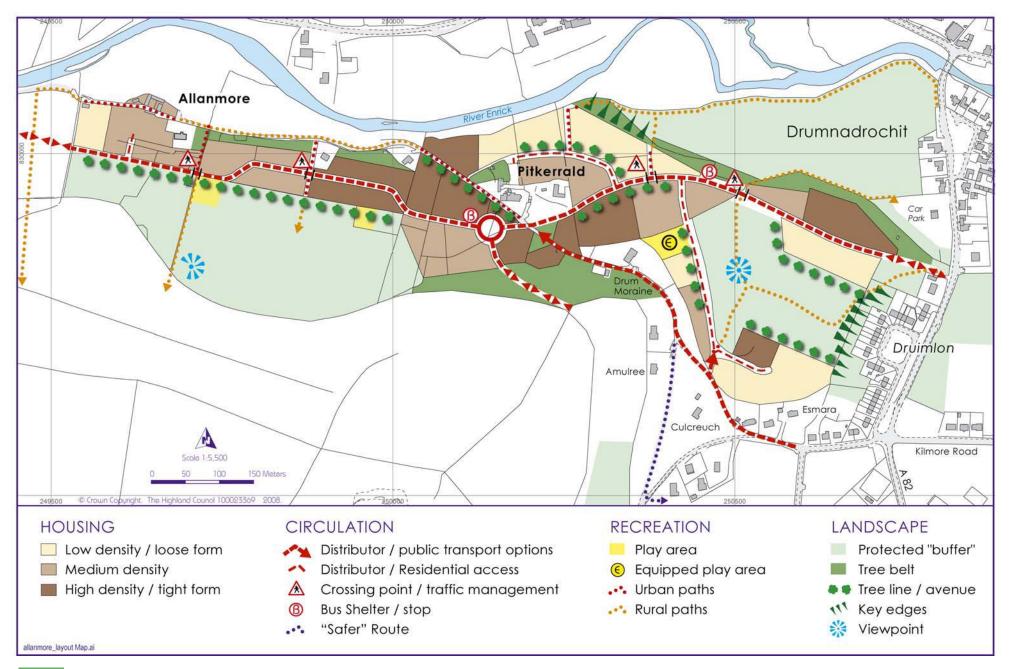
5.3 Traditional design and finishes should be the staple feature of building throughout, but with opportunity for modern architecture in key places. The emphasis on linear form lays particular stress on overriding - though not exclusively - commonality in building lines, roof pitches and orientation of development. The profile of "streets" can be varied to add interest and punctuation. Buildings or groups of buildings should step up or down to one another, occasionally sitting proud or recessed in the street "scene" or articulated to give angles to slow traffic and manage public safety.

5.4 Where development is of lower density, scope exists to extend the curtilage of properties into the adjoining "buffer", including as separate allotments or "paddock" grounds. Such incursions should ensure a carefully shaped and managed edge to development. The farm steadings at Allanmore present a redevelopment option.

Table 4 : Design Principles: Housing Guidelines - Form and Design						
	density (units per ha.)	height to width ratio for streets	depth / width of site/block	character/ form	buildings per 100m of frontage	parking per house/hold
Higher density/ Higher intensity	>25	1:5 - 1:4	25 x 30m	groups / flats 2/3 storey	8-10	1-2
Medium intensity/ Medium density	15-20	1:3 - 1:1.5	15/20m x 30/40m	larger, plots, single	4-6	1
Lower density/ Lower intensity	<15	1:3 - 1:1.5	60m x 25-30m	semi / terraced smaller plots	3-5	2

LAYOUT

8



Circulation

5.5 The Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands should be configured with a 6.0m distributor "loop" road linking the village centre and with potential to extend through towards Balmacaan and to the west of Allanmore. This should be designed as a public transport route, with preferred gradient of 1:20 (and not exceeding 1:12.5). Provision will be made for a bus bay/shelter at 600m, bus stops at 300m intervals and chicanes at approximately 150m intervals combining crossing points and pedestrian refuges. The costs of that part of the road network linking the Lower Milton lands (outwith the development "footprint") to the village centre/A82 and/or involving improvements to Pitkerrald Road, will attach pro-rata to each of the landholdings.

5.6 Construction of the distributor road linking Pitkerrald to Balmacaan will be for such time as the Balmacaan lands are released for development. All potential to "ransom" within the development and on adjoining land in the same ownership will be extinguished. The distributor should also function as a residential access with connecting "streets/avenues" and key multi-user routes. The network could incorporate right angle *junctions* or

Circulation - Action/Implementation

The formal multi-user network will be an integral part of the development of each phase/landholding at developer cost. An *off-site urban* "safer route" capable of "multi-use" should be regularized/formed through to the schools, upgrading the Balmacaan track. Landowner agreements will be sought to secure shared costs and land/access.

The informal network could comprise part of a Core Path project/or the public access elements of any "Woodland In and Around Towns" (WIAT) scheme. The reservation of land for such routes will be secured by agreement with landowners. <u>Section 75 Agreement will be sought in relation to the land required to form all roads/</u><u>thoroughfares including off-site links.</u>

angular deflection/sharp curves as "calming" devices. Provision for a margin for "street-side" parking might be made in association with terraced properties and dedicated off-street facilities provided within courtyards and plots. Traffic flows are not expected to justify bespoke kerbside-recycling pick-up bays.

5.7 A network of pedestrian, cyclist and multi-user thoroughfares should reflect the main desire lines and recreational paths. These will be:

- formal, direct and lit routes urban in character following east-west road lines, occasionally segregated by open spaces, treed verges and natural features but avoiding the rear of properties. These should link facilities and the existing networks towards the village centre and the schools;
- informal, *indirect* walks *rural in character* (except where routes pass through development) - following the *natural* lines of the river, woodland and field drains, comprising part of an orbital system of paths. These should connect the Balmacaan/Craigmonie paths with the Enrick (including a crossing to Easter/Milton) and the village centre. Scope exists to create strategic north-south cross-links through focal points at Pitkerrald, Allanmore and the "knoll".

5.8 Further to paras. 4.1 and 4.2, landowners/developers are encouraged to fully investigate the engineering/design requirements of the access options via Pitkerrald Road and the A82 south of the village car park. Given their implications respectively for land assembly and earthworks/disturbance to trees - the latter also taking account of the potential to realign the A82 in future - Transport Scotland is encouraged to assess their suitability on their technical merits, in order to give the "market" maximum flexibility in any outcome.

9

Recreation

5.9 The *draft SPP11 Physical Activity and Open Space* identifies a requirement for 60 sq.m of open space per household comprising 40 sq.m divided between parks, sports areas, allotments, green corridors, semi-natural space and civic space; and 20 sq. m of informal recreation space/equipped play.

5.10 Set against these guidelines Table 5: *Informal Recreation/ Equipped Play Space* indicates that some 4,110 sq. m of informal recreation/equipped play space should be provided as an integral part of the Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands. This should be distributed pro-rata with the development potential of each landholding, located convenient to every home. Consistent with the pattern of equipped play facilities in the village, one equipped play area should be provided centrally; and informal recreation spaces should be located within the individual landholdings and generally within 150m of every house. Table 5 summarises developer requirements accordingly.

Table 5 : Informal Recreation/Equipped Play Space						
		sq. m	equipped play area	informal recreation space		
Lower Milton	45%	1,852	1x sq m	2x sq m		
Pitkerrald	25%	1,029	1x sq m	1x sq m		
Allanmore	30%	1,234	1x sq m	2x sq m		
Total		4,115				

5.11 An equipped play area and informal recreation space could associate with the "knoll" as a significant open space/focal point, where provision could also incorporate viewpoint and picnic facilities; and informal recreational spaces could be located within the adjoining "buffers".

5.12 Significant expansion of the village (partly through development of the Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands) may give scope to address the community's wider open space needs, where deficiencies might be met within the landholdings/ownerships involved. Applying the standards attaching to *NPPG11 Sport and Recreation*, the existing housing stock (600 homes) would support some 1400 residents – increasing to 800 homes and up to 1900 residents, were the Allanmore-Pitkerrald land to be fully built-out. The corresponding open space requirement for youth/ adult activities would be the equivalent of 3.0-3.4 ha. comprising pitches, greens, courts; increasing perhaps to as much as 4.8-5.4 ha. if long term aspirations for the village materialise. Existing provision for these activities in Drumnadrochit is 4.1 ha.

5.13 Arising from this analysis, a further 1.8-2.0 ha. of land will be required in association with the development of the Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands for pitches, greens, courts. Such facilities should be conveniently distributed in the village and take account of those established. Alternative locations for additional recreation facilities might include land south of Kilmore; east or west of the village centre; or at Balmacaan (long term). Whilst pitches could be an acceptable use within the flood plain, such a preference may fragment facilities, with scope to locate courts and greens for example, adjacent to the existing sports field. Where any of these options involve land in the same ownership as the Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands, landowner agreement may be explored to secure the potential for such provision and the necessary access. The residual buffers contiguous with the Allanmore-Pitkerrald comprise some land 14 ha. of land which is fragmented. Further "undevelopable" land in the same ownerships may be relieved of existing activities as development proceeds.

Landscape

5.14 Heavily wooded edges give exceptional visual containment and shelter; the large individual specimens associating with the Pitkerrald and Allanmore steadings, important landmarks to be protected. However, the existing structure of mature trees casts substantial shading over parts of the Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands, particularly in the lee of the north facing slopes of Craigmonie. The residual fields, a prominent knoll and the flood plain offer contrast; an open setting for development enabling fine views in all directions. As land between the "knoll" and Drumlon is open to views from the lower ground by Kilmore and development in this area would break the skyline, this foreground should remain as a landscape feature.

5.15 Sustaining this setting is dependent on a land management regime to retain the open character of the residual lands and reinforce the main treed features. In particular, the wooded escarpment should be strengthened with new planting and a programme to replace over mature or hazardous trees. A new belt of planting - 20m. wide - comprising a gradation of small, medium and large trees held above the slope where it draws away from the river; and reinstatement of woodland on the escarpment where this has become discontinued towards Pitkerrald, are priorities. Further woodland planting giving emphasis to the margins of the River Enrick and the lower reaches of Craigmonie - and associating with features such as public access routes and field drains – is recommended. This will require reconciliation with future use of the adjoining open lands, but could be compatible with farming, recreation or conservation activities.

5.16 Treed lines and avenues should read as part of the predominantly linear building form and layout. Small-medium scale ornamental species, evenly spaced and planted 15-20m. apart are characteristic of the village. Sited within the margins of the open fields, and held 20-30m. from development, these features would give formality to the building edge, accentuate streets and key vistas, and filter light and views.

right: the "knoll"

Particular attention will be paid to the detail of boundary treatments associated with individual properties and groups of buildings. Where development is of higher density/higher intensity, formal, hard edges - walls - are preferable; where of lower density/lower intensity - hedges - may be more appropriate. In either case, careful consideration will be given to design style and height with a view to securing continuity and acceptable transition between materials/species. The use of timber balustrade fencing will be exceptional and permitted only in *rear* locations to give limited enclosure.

Recreation - Action/Implementation

Pro-rata contributions towards the provision of play open space including equipment and maintenance of facilities will be attributed against each landholding and secured by agreement where necessary.

Discussions will be expected with landowners in relation to the future use and availability of residual "buffer" lands and Section 75 Agreement in relation to public/recreational access to such areas.



Landscape - Action/Implementation

A comprehensive design plan and management agreement in respect of all amenity land, tree planting, open space and boundary treatments comprising the public realm will be sought with landowner/developer interests for each landholding/phase of development. This will be implemented by the landowner/developer as an integral part of any agreed development proposal.

5.17 The structural landscape elements should be the core of a Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme proposal with a view to obtaining 70-90% assistance towards the cost of works under the *Woodland In and Around Towns* (WIAT) initiative. Landowner agreement will be sought as part of any development proposals to secure the necessary land in each case. This might be taken forward as an early project under the auspices of a Community Woodland Trust or similar body and might extend beyond the Allanmore-Pitkerrald lands to embrace wider village opportunities.



left: the Balmacaan track through to the schools

CONTACTS

Views are invited on this Draft Development Brief. These should be sent by Friday 15th August 2008 to:

Director of Planning and Development, Planning and Development Service, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road Inverness IV3 5NX

For further information please contact:

Colin Mackenzie/Malcolm Macleod (Tel: 01463 702261/702506) Development Plans Team Planning and Development Service The Highland Council Glenurquhart Road Inverness IV3 5NX *e-mail: colin.v.mackenzie*@highland.gov.uk/ malcolm.macleod@highland.gov.uk/

